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Chairman: Mr. Toscano (Vice-Chairman) ..... Switzerland

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In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Toscano (Switzerland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 2.30 p.m.

Expression of sympathy on the death of the Executive Secretary of the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

1. **The Chairman**, on behalf of Committee members, expressed sadness at the passing away of Ms. Joke Waller-Hunter, the Executive Secretary of the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Agenda item 52: Sustainable development (A/60/3, A/60/25 and Add.1, A/60/79, A/60/111, A/60/129, A/60/336 and A/60/167)

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (*continued*) (A/60/115, A/60/158 and A/60/261)

(b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (*continued*) (A/60/401)

(c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (*continued*) (A/60/180)

(d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind (*continued*) (A/60/171)

(e) Sustainable development in mountain regions (*continued*) (A/60/309)

(f) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, including the implementation of the World Solar Programme 1996-2005 (*continued*) (A/60/82 and A/60/154)

(g) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (*continued*) (A/60/169 and A/60/171)

(h) Convention on Biological Diversity (*continued*) (A/60/171)

(i) Rendering assistance to poor mountain countries to overcome obstacles in socio-economic and ecological areas (*continued*)

2. **Mr. Grigore** (Republic of Moldova), speaking on behalf of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and the Republic of Moldova (GUAM), welcomed the agreements reached at the 2005 World Summit on water and sanitation, climate change, biodiversity, transfer of technology and capacity-building. The Second Committee would have a vital role to play in promoting their implementation. The national programmes and strategies of the four GUAM countries to follow up the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Plan of Implementation) and Agenda 21 took an integrated and coordinated approach to achieving sustainable development. Their main objectives were poverty eradication, improving consumption and production patterns, protection and sustainable use of natural resources and capacity-building.

3. Commending the measures undertaken by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination in coordinating system-wide sustainable development activities, he stressed the need for an even more coherent, coordinated and integrated environmental institutional framework. Certain elements of the existing mechanism, particularly the Global Environment Facility and the Commission on Sustainable Development, should be strengthened.

4. The GUAM States welcomed the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol. They looked forward to both the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the first meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. A more inclusive and participatory international framework for climate change beyond 2012, based on lessons learned and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, would be vital. They hailed the 2005 World Summit commitments with regard to land degradation and desertification. The International Year of Deserts and Desertification should provide an opportunity to strengthen the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in

Africa, and implement it in the larger context of the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

5. The GUAM States welcomed the adoption of the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters and supported the view that development strategies should incorporate disaster risk reduction and be tailored to local needs. It agreed with the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction that investment in disaster risk reduction would enhance sustainable development and the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance. They were in favour of GUAM welcomed the increased focus on capacity-building and knowledge-sharing in the design of disaster risk reduction measures, and ongoing efforts to enhance coordination throughout the Organization. The United Nations system should take the lead in implementing the provisions of the Hyogo Framework. The GUAM States looked forward to the results of the work of the United Nations Development Group in strengthening United Nations country teams in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

6. The expansion of renewable energy development in developing countries and countries with economies in transition was a very positive development. He stressed the need for continued international research on the application of renewable energy technologies, and the importance of addressing institutional capacity gaps and developing human capacity through awareness-raising, education and knowledge transfer. The Global Environment Facility and the international financial institutions, including the World Bank Group, must make every effort to increase the access of countries with economies in transition to technology and financing.

7. Lastly, he stressed the importance of the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development for policy actions with regard to water, sanitation and human settlements. The GUAM States looked forward to the review year under the Commission's current cycle and hoped that the Commission's fourteenth and fifteenth sessions would witness progress in the areas of energy, sustainable industrial development and climate under the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

8. **Mr. Noghès** (Monaco) said that ecological degradation aggravated poverty and threatened the survival of the human race. His delegation looked forward to achieving significant progress during the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", 2005-2015. Agreeing with the Secretary-General and UNEP that safeguarding the environment was key to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and those of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, he urged Member States to mainstream environmental protection into all issues before the international community.

9. Disaster reduction, too, was an integral part of sustainable development and a prerequisite to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Monaco had offered assistance to the victims of the tsunami in South Asia, the famine in the Niger, the flooding in Guatemala and the earthquake in Pakistan. It had also supported national non-governmental organizations providing humanitarian assistance to populations affected by natural disasters.

10. Aware of the high percentage of natural disasters brought on by climate risk, Monaco would shortly be ratifying the Kyoto Protocol, introducing emissions reduction measures at home and, at the international level, participating in flexibility mechanisms to implement specific cooperation projects with developing countries or countries in transition within the framework of the Clean Development Mechanism and joint implementation. In connection with the International Year of Deserts and Desertification, 2006, the Principality would continue to support the multi-country projects of the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Thus far, it had helped to finance three projects in five African countries — Algeria, Burkina Faso, Mali, the Niger and Tunisia. It had also engaged in activities to combat desertification in the context of its bilateral cooperation with Morocco and the Niger.

11. The proliferation of environmental protection institutions and instruments highlighted the need to establish an integrated structure for coordinating all actions. Better circulation of information and clear and effective action were essential to addressing such a cross-cutting theme. Monaco supported proposals put forward at the High-level Plenary Meeting to convert UNEP into the United Nations environmental organization.

12. **Mr. Alim** (Bangladesh) said that disaster-prone countries must have access to timely and unrestricted

early-warning information. Under its Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme, Bangladesh, a disaster-prone country, had adopted a more comprehensive risk reduction culture encompassing disaster preparedness, early warning, risk reduction, prevention, mitigation and development. A number of financial mechanisms were in place to address the needs of disaster victims, including agricultural credit, microcredit and community funds. Disaster reduction strategies had also been mainstreamed into the country's poverty reduction strategy paper.

13. Bangladesh had been one of the first countries to institute a national platform on risk reduction. Part of the Comprehensive Disaster Management Programme, the platform formed the basis for the Corporate Plan — A Framework for Action 2005-2009, which focused on professionalizing the disaster management system; mainstreaming disaster management and building strategic partnerships; empowering communities; expanding risk reduction across a broader range of hazards; and strengthening emergency response systems.

14. Nonetheless, its efforts to address the human, material and economic challenges of natural disaster were hampered by insufficient resources and technology. Bangladesh, in a high-risk earthquake zone and vulnerable to frequent cyclones, hoped to receive international cooperation for the construction of a state-of-the-art disaster warning system in the Bay of Bengal.

15. **Mr. Berrah** (Algeria) noted with satisfaction that the International Year of Deserts and Desertification, 2006 was giving greater visibility to its programmes through its very public profile and the involvement of internationally recognized figures. Regional efforts to combat desertification required major technical and financial support that could not be furnished by developing countries alone. The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification would benefit from linkages between soil degradation and the Millennium Development Goals and from closer synergies with the sustainable development conventions and other competent organizations.

16. Regional and subregional cooperation in combating desertification were particularly vital in Africa, where desertification threatened agriculture and, thus, food security, two issues of major concern for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union. The agricultural sector accounted for about 40 per cent of the GDP in African countries and was a major source of jobs and poverty reduction. The NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme was now widely integrated in the national agricultural development plans of African countries.

17. Under Algeria's National Agricultural and Rural Development Plan, agriculture was playing a more dynamic role in achieving sustainable growth and addressing the problems of soil degradation and food insecurity. At the international level, Algeria was attempting to sensitize development partners to the importance of research and the transfer of appropriate technologies. It was emphasizing, in particular, the systematic observation of land degradation in the affected areas, early warning systems and additional financing for the implementation of the Convention.

18. It was encouraging that desertification was now an issue before various international forums and organs, including the Commission on Sustainable Development, which had identified it as one of the issues in the thematic clusters to be subject to an evaluation during the 2008-2009 cycle. He was pleased to announce that Algeria would be hosting a high-level world summit on protecting deserts and combating desertification, to coincide with the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

19. **Mr. Tesfu** (Ethiopia) said that, in an effort to implement the globally agreed goals and targets relating to water, sanitation and human settlements, his country had constructed and rehabilitated rural and urban water supplies. At 37.9 per cent, access by its population to clean and fresh water in 2003/04 had been slightly higher than the figure for the previous year.

20. The voluntary resettlement programme in the rural areas had reduced pressure on natural resources and directly and indirectly restored benefits to the ecosystem. In accordance with the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation, Ethiopia had begun the process of slum upgrading in the urban areas. Home ownership for low-income groups had been promoted through targeted subsidies and by empowering and building the capacity of local communities in such special skills as participatory housing provision, slum upgrading, poverty alleviation

and income generation. Significant progress had been made in promoting good urban governance through decentralization, local government reforms and the participation of civil society in governance and habitat management. UN-Habitat had played a vital role in mobilizing resources for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda in Ethiopia.

21. Ethiopia's National Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme recognized the importance of environmental protection, sustainable production and energy consumption, disaster prevention and preparedness. It accorded priority in three areas addressing land degradation, deforestation, overgrazing, soil erosion, loss of soil fertility and disruption of the hydrological cycle, in particular in highly degraded drought-prone and food-insecure areas; strengthening regulatory and institutional capacity and natural resource preservation and management; and promoting the sustainable use of biodiversity resources.

22. In recent years, his country had made significant strides in implementing the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. Its national action programme was aimed at raising public awareness of desertification and monitoring the effects of drought. Environmental science had been incorporated into the school curriculum, and environmental clubs had been launched with public and private support. Implementation of the early warning system and drought mitigation capacity had been strengthened, and the national Government had formed a crisis management group to take immediate action in the event of a natural disaster.

23. Thus far, Ethiopia had made every effort to address the development issues highlighted in the Commission's first two-year implementation cycle in an integrated and comprehensive manner without seeking too much in the way of external financial or technical assistance; however, it had not been possible to mobilize sufficient funds to implement its national action plan. Without increased international partnership, it would be unable to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

24. **Mr. Wang** Qi (China) said that the global trend of environmental degradation had yet to be reversed, and a large number of developing countries, in their efforts to achieve sustainable development, were still faced with severe constraints in terms of financial resources and technology. In order to bring about a positive momentum for international sustainable development, it was essential to implement the targets and plans set at the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The global agenda for sustainable development had to be translated into national strategies, and Governments should formulate those strategies in accordance with national conditions, and implement them by using economic, legal and administrative means in an integrated manner, mobilizing the entire society and establishing an extensive partnership. The international community must create a sound external environment for the sustainable development of developing countries and give them a reasonable space in which to develop their policies. The developed countries should provide them with assistance in terms of financial resources, technology and capacity-building and the international community should establish a monitoring and facilitation mechanism for that purpose. Global environmental issues at the regional level must be treated as a priority, especially such problems as the shortage of water resources, urban air pollution, soil erosion, desertification, natural disasters and environmental degradation.

25. China had adopted a scientific approach to development that was people-centred, comprehensive, harmonious and sustainable. It had formulated its own Agenda 21 and programme of action for sustainable development in the early twenty-first century. It was also setting up, on a pilot basis, a development appraisal system called the "green gross domestic product". China had invested much effort in developing a recycling economy, promoting clean production and raising awareness of the need to practise economy in an attempt to introduce a new production and consumption mode that was energy-efficient, reduced pollution and promoted the economical use of resources and environmental protection. During the forthcoming eleventh five-year plan period, China would continue with the new industrialization model, integrating industrialization into sustainable development and using the protection of resources and improvement of the environment as both important means and ultimate ends of development.

26. It was extremely urgent to enhance the monitoring and early warning capacity of developing countries regarding major natural disasters, to which

they were particularly vulnerable. China hoped that the international community, and in particular the developed countries, would proceed from humanitarian considerations and help the developing countries with their capacity-building in the prevention of, reduction of and preparedness for natural disasters. In the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami, China had launched the largest external assistance operation in its history. In September 2005, the Chinese Government and relevant United Nations agencies had jointly sponsored the Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction at which the Beijing Action for Disaster Risk Reduction in Asia had been adopted.

27. The key to solving problem of climate change lay in technological innovation and its transfer and dissemination. In order to carry out flexible and practical international cooperation it was necessary to seek an innovative international regime to mobilize the enthusiasm of countries to participate in efforts to address climate change and to remove obstacles to international cooperation, including the transfer of technology.

28. The Chinese Government had always supported the development of renewable sources of energy through such measures as tax benefits and investment subsidies, and its small hydroelectric power, wind power, solar heating and biomass gas and power generation technologies were ready for large-scale commercialization. China's law on renewable energy, which would enter into force on 1 January 2006, would create a more enabling policy environment for the market application, technological advancement and industrial development of renewable energy. The Beijing International Renewable Energy Conference, to be held, in November 2005, would further facilitate international cooperation and would contribute to the promotion of renewable energy around the world.

29. Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification had been frustrated owing to a shortage of funds and a malfunctioning fund operation mechanism. The international community must pay attention to desertification from the perspective of the global environment and explore a mutually beneficial mechanism for the transfer of technology that would be conducive to the implementation of the Convention. The developed countries should fulfil their Convention obligation of providing the developing countries with financial assistance and technological support.

30. China had ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity and approved the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. It stood ready to join other States parties in striving for their effective implementation so as to ensure that while mankind reaped maximum benefits from the development and application of biotechnology, any risks to the environment, biological diversity and human health would be minimized.

31. **Mr. Alsaker** (Norway) said that his Government, which placed great emphasis on the environment agenda both within Norway and internationally, would like to see a stronger United Nations follow-up of the agenda. It endorsed the call in the 2005 World Summit Outcome for a more coherent framework for environmental activities in the United Nations system, and would like stronger links between the system's normative work and its operational activities. It was important to build upon existing institutions such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Establishing a United Nations environmental organization would be instrumental in promoting sustainable development. Due respect should be given to the legal autonomy of the multilateral environment agreements.

32. His Government had been pleased to note the increased cooperation between the conventions related to biological diversity, but a greater effort would have to be made if the 2010 target was to be reached. The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources provided an important means for achieving sustainable development. The developed countries wanted the countries that were rich in genetic resources — for the most part developing countries — to protect that diversity in the common interest, and with that in view the users of genetic resources should share the benefits arising from their commercial application with the countries providing the resources. The aim of the international regime on access and benefit-sharing launched by the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity was to ensure that the countries and indigenous people providing genetic resources were compensated through monetary and non-monetary benefits, which would in turn be an incentive for them to preserve their biological diversity. Norway, as both a provider and a user country of genetic resources, would play an active and constructive part in the negotiations.

33. His delegation hoped that the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, to be held in Brazil in March 2006, would reach agreement on identification requirements for shipments of genetically modified organisms, which would allow importing countries to verify that the genetically modified organisms they received were in fact those they had agreed to import and would also provide the biotechnology industry with a level playing field with respect to trade in genetically modified organisms. Norway urged those countries that had not yet ratified the Cartagena Protocol to do so.

34. His Government would increase its efforts in the field of development and utilization of renewable energy and work with international partners to increase access to sustainable energy with a view to achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

35. The Kyoto Protocol was but a first, modest step towards stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere, and much more would be required if dangerous human interference with the climate system was to be prevented. Above all, there needed to be a truly global effort where all countries played their part in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Norway hoped that the first meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in Montreal from 28 November to 9 December 2005, would succeed in establishing a broad process towards agreeing on a global climate regime from 2012 onwards.

36. **Ms. Soto** (Costa Rica) said that the protection, conservation and sustainable use of natural resources were necessary in order to achieve a high level of development. Furthermore, international cooperation and the exchange of successful experiences with respect to environmental protection were essential. It was important to acknowledge the fundamental role that forests played in protecting the environment. The Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change recognized only one of the many benefits provided by forests, namely carbon sequestration. Article 3.3 of the Protocol was restrictive. In order to obtain greater benefits from the Clean Development Mechanism, it would appear that countries must first suffer deforestation instead of protecting their primary forests and preventing deforestation in the first place. The international community should provide adequate incentives to developing countries. Her country, along with Papua New Guinea and other developing countries, had founded the Rainforest Coalition with the goal of channelling funds obtained through the carbon and forest product markets to sustainable development and poverty eradication.

37. The primary industry in her country, tourism, was based on the non-consumptive use of its biodiversity. Thus, the sustainable use of its natural resources was a source of wealth. Her country also promoted community-based rural tourism, which contributed to the preservation of local traditions, supported the development of rural communities and provided additional sources of income.

38. Sustainable activities should protect resources in the marine areas outside national jurisdiction. Accordingly, until an appropriate legal instrument had been adopted, her country was insisting on a moratorium on bottom-trawling.

39. Her country was pleased that the Kyoto Protocol had finally entered into force early in 2005, and it encouraged countries which had not yet ratified the Protocol to do so. In September 2005 her country had hosted the Second International Expert Meeting on the 10-Year Framework of Programmes for Sustainable Consumption and Production. The report of the meeting would be submitted to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its fourteenth session. Participants at the Meeting had discussed, inter alia, the need to consider the cost of inaction when setting policies, since in many cases remediation could prove more expensive than work undertaken at the outset. International cooperation and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies were essential in that regard.

40. Her country had developed a legal framework to promote research on and the use of renewable resources that were environmentally friendly and facilitated sustainable development. She described some of its national efforts in that regard.

41. **Mr. Gass** (Switzerland) said that the common future of the world could not be envisaged without sustainable development, which reconciled protection and development of the environment, economic development and social progress. His delegation shared the Secretary-General's view that the United Nations system lacked coherence in the governance of international environmental activities, and it therefore

welcomed the decision of heads of State and Government to explore the possibility of setting up a more coherent institutional framework, including a more integrated structure that built on existing institutions and internationally agreed instruments, as well as treaty bodies and specialized agencies. It hoped that in the follow-up process all options, including that of creating a United Nations organization for the environment, would be studied.

42. Switzerland called on those industrialized countries that had not already ratified the Kyoto Protocol to do so, and expressed the hope that the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol and the eleventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Montreal in November and December 2005, would initiate a process defining the commitment of the industrialized countries and starting a discussion on the effective and equitable participation of developing countries. It was essential to ensure that the system set up to combat climate change included those countries whose absolute emissions accounted for an important proportion of overall emissions.

43. The Convention to Combat Desertification had important achievements to its credit, including the establishment of action plans and programmes and the evaluation of the advance of the desert, but recent debate had often focused on financial resources or on the activities of multilateral institutions, role-sharing and responsibilities, while the efforts of the countries affected were often underestimated. That lack of vision threatened to cost the international community dear, and his delegation hoped that the beginning of the Convention's second decade would be marked by a renewal of the constructive spirit and solidarity that had prevailed during its negotiation.

44. Switzerland was actively engaged in programmes on sustainable consumption and production, as decided at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and had set up a working group whose aim was to surmount the obstacles faced by Governments desiring to pursue a policy of sustainable public procurement that was beneficial to the environment, economy and social progress. All interested countries were invited to take part.

45. Turning to the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, he said that the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015) must be implemented at the local, national and international levels with a view to substantially reducing damage from natural disasters by promoting a culture of prevention. An integrated approach had to be adopted, with the participation of all stakeholders, equal account being taken of the mechanisms of prevention, emergency response and recovery. Disaster reduction must be based on recognized principles of good governance, such as participation, transparency and fairness. His delegation supported the measures proposed by the Secretary-General in his report on implementing the International Strategy, especially strengthening it as a system.

46. The issue of sustainable development in mountain regions remained at the heart of Switzerland's concerns. Regional agreements were working well, but much remained to be done. Ways must be found to eradicate the poverty that all too often afflicted mountain communities, for example by compensating them for the ecological services they provided to populations in the lowlands. His delegation hoped that the Secretary-General's next report would provide a more analytical and substantial approach, particularly in that area.

47. **Mr. Koonjul** (Mauritius), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), noted that the report of the Secretary-General (A/60/401) recognized that there had been little time for an exchange of views among members of the United Nations inter-agency consultative group on small island developing States for the articulation of a comprehensive plan, as requested in General Assembly resolution 59/311, for the full and effective implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The Alliance noted that the initial response of a number of agencies was still to be received, and that the matrix presented in the report was a reflection of the limited response. The three Alliance regions had now completed their review meetings to follow up on implementation of the Mauritius Strategy. A number of delegates had encountered difficulties in their travel arrangements to attend the review meetings, and the Pacific regional group and the regional group for the Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Seas (AIMS) deplored the failure of the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries,

Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to attend their meetings.

48. The Caribbean region had given particular attention to capacity-building, the need for technical support to develop national sustainable development strategies and suitable indicators, and the need for a supportive network of experts that could be seconded for limited durations for specific tasks. The region had stressed the importance of developing national sustainable development policies on the basis of the Barbados model. The Pacific region had stressed the need for collective cooperation and partnership as an essential element in implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. It had also agreed that the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy must be nationally driven and coordinated. The AIMS region had focused on the Millennium Development Goals and the need to adjust them to national circumstances in view of the significant disparities in their levels of development and their capacity for adaptation. It had been agreed that three parallel processes would be pursued: the development of technical plans for the AIMS group, proposals for a more formal management framework, and fund-raising for implementing the technical programme and ensuring appropriate participation at a future ministerial meeting.

49. The success of the three regional meetings had been due to the assistance and cooperation of the Small Island Developing States Unit of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. It was a cause of concern, however, to the Alliance that a number of the staff in that Unit were still funded by voluntary contributions. The Alliance had studied the situation and concluded that the strengthening of the Unit was of the utmost urgency and necessity, as had been agreed by the General Assembly in a number of resolutions. That would entail an increase in the number of permanent posts and a rationalization of the work of the United Nations on small island developing States. The Alliance was puzzled that although the General Assembly in each of its last four sessions had asked for the Unit to be strengthened, nothing had been done. The Unit was the primary focal point for small island developing States' work within the United Nations system and should establish a stronger working relationship with all the relevant agencies of the United Nations system, leading to the creation within them of focal points.

50. Poverty, drought, floods, rising temperatures and more intensive and more frequent hurricanes were all closely linked to climate change, and it was now clear that climate change was also responsible for an increase in the spread of diseases such as malaria. The work done by various United Nations agencies showed clearly that there was a need for immediate and comprehensive action. The small island developing States needed to be helped to adapt to climate change, and the relevant provision in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change should be fully implemented.

51. The small island developing States were having difficulties in attracting funding for Clean Development Mechanism projects. The Alliance would be raising the issue at the first meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the eleventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Montreal in November and December 2005, and would be requesting positive differentiation in their favour in respect of Clean Development Mechanism projects, not only because they were unable to attract investments but also because of the disproportionate impact of climate change on them.

52. The Alliance commended the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity for its efforts to develop an island biodiversity work programme and looked forward to the completion of its work on the special conditions of small island developing States.

53. The Alliance underlined the importance of implementing the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, particularly commitments relating to assistance to developing countries, including the small island developing States. It reiterated the need to assist disaster-prone and disaster-stricken countries in their risk reduction, post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation efforts. Many of the disaster-prone small island developing States were unable to secure appropriate insurance owing to the heavy costs they had incurred in previous disasters. That lack of access required particular attention.

54. The Alliance regarded the Mauritius Strategy as the strategic blueprint for attaining sustainable development and implementing the Millennium Development Goals at national level. It remained concerned, however, about the lack of specific, dedicated funding available to the small island

developing States for national strategies and hoped that the United Nations system would give thought to the need to make assistance for national sustainable development more appropriate and better adapted to national conditions.

55. **Mr. Sunaga** (Japan) said that his Government was contributing to the Hyogo Framework for Action in a number of ways. It was supporting the International Recovery Platform by setting up an office for knowledge management in Kobe in collaboration with the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre. It had also been supporting the speedy establishment of a tsunami early warning system for the Indian Ocean and, in cooperation with the United States, would continue to provide tsunami watch information issued by the Japan Meteorological Agency and the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center on request to Indian Ocean countries until the system became fully operational.

56. As had become clear during the drafting of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, an index for objectively measuring the vulnerability of small island developing States was needed. In order to enable donor countries to provide such States with more effective assistance, the international community should support the creation of such a vulnerability index.

57. The discussion on climate change needed to be expanded to consider action beyond 2012. To that end, Japan had been hosting informal meetings to encourage frank exchanges of views on possible further action on climate change, inviting government officials from both developed and developing countries. In addition, Japan had joined the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate, a regional initiative aimed at promoting environmentally friendly development.

58. Turning to the issue of energy, he stressed the importance of expanding the use of natural gas and developing renewable sources of energy such as solar power. Finding cleaner sources of energy would also go a long way towards reducing the emission of greenhouse gases. Every effort should be made to improve energy efficiency through research and development. Japan would continue to support the transfer of technology to developing countries.

59. **Mr. de Rivero** (Peru) said that Peru had had its share of extreme weather phenomena, including El Niño, the last occurrence of which had cost billions of dollars in human and material losses. Peru therefore supported the Mauritius Strategy, particularly the provisions on climate change and sustainable development. His delegation welcomed the thorough analyses that were being conducted, in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, on the technical and institutional links between climate change and disaster risk reduction. His delegation also attached great importance to the speedy implementation of the provisions of the Hyogo Framework for Action concerning the identification of weather-related disasters and the reduction of risks. Information on climate risks should be systematized, and coordination between the secretariats of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the Framework Convention on Climate Change should be improved.

60. **Mr. Mubin** (Malaysia) said that Malaysia was committed to achieving the targets set out in the Johannesburg Programme of Implementation and Agenda 21 in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibility and was taking appropriate actions to ensure that its development was sustainable and balanced. Among other things, Malaysia planned to transform the country into a world centre of excellence in conservation, research and utilization of tropical biological diversity by the year 2020. The many natural calamities and disasters of recent years were an indication of the need to pay serious attention to climate change, particularly global warming. His delegation called on all nations to become parties to the Kyoto Protocol. In order to reduce carbon emissions, Malaysia had taken measures to improve energy efficiency, reduce the burning of fuels and increase the use of renewable energy.

61. The majority of developing countries lacked the capacity and the financial resources needed to minimize the impact of natural disasters. The current solutions, bureaucratic methodologies, policy frameworks and government-to-government aid were not adequate and did not address the underlying problems. Poor nations needed sustainable economic and social development so as to enhance their resilience to natural disasters.

62. The international community should take measures to mitigate the impact of rising crude oil prices on the economies of developing countries. The United Nations could play a leading role by mobilizing

international cooperation in dealing with the issue. On the domestic front, Governments should be encouraged to adopt measures to reduce their dependence on diesel and petrol through conservation and increased use of natural gas and other alternative energy sources such as palm-oil-based biodiesel. Malaysia had already adopted several measures to help reduce its dependency on fossil fuel.

63. **Mr. Hannesson** (Iceland) said that Iceland, an island State, shared many of the concerns of small island developing States in the area of sustainable development. There was scope for cooperation in many areas, including the sustainable use of energy. At the International Meeting to Review Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States held in Mauritius in January 2005, the Government of Iceland had announced its decision to launch a special initiative to make available US$ 1 million in a special fund to support programmes on sustainable use of natural resources in small island developing States. Those funds would be used particularly in the fields of sustainable fisheries and renewable energy.

64. Iceland had taken steps to utilize its own geothermal energy potential and to share its expertise in a number of ways. Although almost all energy for stationary applications came from clean renewables, nearly 30 per cent of primary energy originated from imported fossil fuels. As only 20 per cent of the technically feasible hydropower had been harnessed, and only a small fraction of the country's geothermal potential available for electricity had been utilized, there was still a large untapped potential for using clean energy. The most promising option was to use electricity to make hydrogen for use as the primary energy carrier for ships and vehicles. Iceland was committed to working with others to develop that technology for the benefit of all. International consensus for sustainable energy solutions was necessary to accelerate technical innovations.

65. In November 2003, ministers from 15 countries and the European Union had announced the creation of the International Partnership for the Hydrogen Economy. His Government had offered Iceland as an international platform for hydrogen research and experimentation with a view to facilitating the sharing of its pioneering experiences.

66. **Mr. Daniel** (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), speaking on behalf of the members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) which were Members of the United Nations, said that the CARICOM countries attached tremendous importance to the Mauritius Strategy. At the recently concluded Caribbean Regional Meeting held in Saint Kitts and Nevis, agreement had been reached on the need for a regional coordinating mechanism for implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. Efforts to define elements for such a mechanism were under way. The CARICOM countries welcomed the decision of the Commission on Sustainable Development to dedicate one day of its review sessions to a review of the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy, focusing on that year's thematic cluster and on any new developments relating to small island developing States.

67. CARICOM shared the concerns reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (A/60/154) regarding persistent energy poverty, the risk of climate change, air pollution, the rising demand for energy and the issue of natural-resource depletion. The expansion of electricity generation was a key aspect of economic development in the Caribbean countries, yet conventional methods of production through fossil fuel plants were among the most significant contributors to air, land and water pollution. To address those concerns, CARICOM countries had developed the Caribbean Renewable Energy Development Programme to prepare a regional project to remove barriers to the use of renewable energy and to foster its development and commercialization. CARICOM would welcome continued international support for that programme and would encourage the further promotion of awareness of renewable sources as an integral element of sustainable development.

68. CARICOM was taking a proactive approach in addressing the challenges and threats of climate change, which particularly affected small island developing States and low-lying coastal States. They had undertaken a regional project for mainstreaming adaptation to climate change and had established a Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre. The CARICOM countries would encourage a more proactive approach at the international level through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol. They would support

sending a strong message to the first Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention to develop a more inclusive international framework for stabilizing and reducing greenhouse gas emissions beyond the expiry of the Kyoto Protocol.

69. The CARICOM countries welcomed the adoption of the Hyogo Framework for Action and recognized their individual responsibilities for its implementation. CARICOM supported the recommendation of the Secretary-General in his report on Implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/60/180) to strengthen the Strategy system. Likewise they supported the recommendation on the strengthening of regional mechanisms for collaboration and networking in support of national and local efforts to reduce disaster risk. While acknowledging the need for integrating disaster risk reduction into development strategies, the CARICOM countries would like to emphasize the need for improved and rapid humanitarian response, especially financing. They were studying with great interest the proposal for an upgraded central emergency response fund, especially the proposal for setting aside funds for neglected emergencies. The recent experiences of Grenada and Guyana pointed to the need for readily available funding. Despite numerous appeals on behalf of the two countries, donor response had been inadequate, leaving the respective Governments to cope with very limited resources.

70. **Mr. Prabhu** (India) said that India was committed to the international regime represented by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, which were the most appropriate tools to guide international efforts to protect global climate systems by reversing climate change in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

71. India's policies for sustainable development promoted energy efficiency, renewable energy, changing the fuel mix to cleaner sources, energy pricing, pollution abatement, afforestation, mass transport, and differentially higher growth rates of less energy-intensive services sectors as compared to manufacturing. Although all countries must be responsible for national efforts to achieve sustainable development, international action was needed to make available to developing countries the means of implementation. Steps must be taken to make available financial resources, capacity-building and transfer of technology to developing countries. The intellectual property rights issue had been successfully addressed with regard to HIV/AIDS, and there was a similar need for it to be addressed with regard to technologies for energy efficiency and clean energy. A network of research and development institutes from developed and developing countries could be established to engage in research on new technologies, particularly those of interest to developing countries. All collaborative research and development work done through the network could be made available to developing countries free of charge.

72. His delegation welcomed the decision of the Johannesburg Summit to negotiate, within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity, an international regime to promote and safeguard the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the utilization of genetic resources. It also approved of the decision taken at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to mandate the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing to negotiate an international regime in implementation of that decision. As a practical modality for benefit-sharing, the regime should include provisions for mandatory disclosure of the country of origin of genetic resources and prior informed consent in intellectual property applications. India strongly supported sui generis systems for the protection of traditional knowledge that had been developed over millennia so as to ensure that the holders of traditional knowledge fully shared in the benefits arising from the commercial utilization of such knowledge.

73. In the context of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, his delegation welcomed the inclusion of land degradation, desertification and deforestation as a focal area for financing by the Global Environment Facility. The effectiveness of those arrangements, however, would depend largely on the allocation of additional resources to that focal area for financing the needs of affected countries.

74. As to the Mauritius Strategy, his delegation looked forward to its timely and effective implementation. It also welcomed the steps that had been taken to strengthen inter-agency collaborative arrangements within the United Nations system. Inter-agency work on sustainable development should derive

from and closely follow the priorities set by the intergovernmental process.

75. **Mr. Mabhongo** (South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), said that the need to integrate social development, environmental protection and economic development had become increasingly pressing, and he underscored the importance of international cooperation to assist developing countries in meeting their sustainable development objectives.

76. The members of SADC agreed with the observation by the Secretary-General in his report contained in document A/60/261 that one challenge facing the international community was to ensure effective follow-up to the policy decisions on water, sanitation and human settlements adopted at the thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and to continue refining the methods of work of the Commission. The true test of the work and relevance of the Commission would be the extent to which it had an impact on the implementation of its decisions. The issues to be considered next by the Commission — energy for sustainable development, industrial development, atmosphere/air pollution and climate change — were central to the efforts of developing countries to eradicate poverty and put their societies on a path to sustainable development. He provided examples of problems to which those issues had given rise in the SADC region.

77. The members of SADC also looked forward to the report of the Secretary-General on progress achieved in the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy and hoped that the report would contain recommendations for the full and effective implementation of the Strategy. All States should strive to enhance implementation with respect to all the issues to which he had referred earlier in his statement and should bear in mind the principle of common but differentiated responsibility. SADC members cooperated at the regional level to increase access to energy and strengthen economic integration, and they looked to the international community to provide increased support, especially for the transfer of technology and the provision of technical and financial resources. Donor countries in particular, as well as the international financial institutions, should increase their involvement, inter alia, by funding infrastructure.

78. The seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification had demonstrated the challenge posed by desertification and land degradation for developing countries, especially those in Africa, and SADC called for increased support for the Convention. The Community also was in favour of an adequate and robust replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund. The Facility had made significant contributions to the financing of United Nations environmental conventions. Urgent steps should be taken to finalize the draft memorandum of understanding between the Facility and the Convention on land degradation.

79. The member States of SADC looked forward to the full implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building adopted at the twenty-third session of the Governing Council of UNEP. SADC would also continue to call for strengthening the United Nations Headquarters in Nairobi, which was the seat of both UNEP and UN-Habitat.

80. **Mr. Chaudhry** (Pakistan) said that 13 years after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, with many international conferences in between, poverty, disease, underdevelopment and environmental degradation continued to defy the international community and in many cases the situation had deteriorated in the interim. In today's interdependent world, it was more important than ever to integrate economic growth, social development and environmental protection as mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development. It was now time for measures at all levels to implement internationally agreed development goals, including those related to sustainable development.

81. His delegation fully supported the call by the Secretary-General for donor Governments and international financial institutions to target funding support to developing countries in key policy options and practical measures as identified in the policy decisions of the Commission for Sustainable Development at its thirteenth session. It also attached considerable importance to the second implementation cycle of the Commission focusing on energy, climate change, industrial development and air pollution/atmosphere.

82. There was a clear relationship between natural disasters, rehabilitation and development. Natural disasters severely affected hard-earned developmental gains in developing countries. Sustainable development was therefore essential for better preparedness to deal with natural disasters. In order to ensure a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation and development, humanitarian assistance should be provided in a manner that supported and facilitated long-term development. In that regard, his delegation welcomed the call by the Secretary-General in his report on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/60/180) for the world community urgently to join forces to break the vicious circle between poverty and environmental degradation and natural disasters.

83. The decision of the 2005 World Summit on the full implementation of the Hyogo Declaration and Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 and the commitments related to assistance for developing countries in the post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes were also relevant. The unprecedented scale of death and destruction in Pakistan in the wake of the earthquake on 8 October 2005 had highlighted the need for a permanent mechanism at the international level, guided by the United Nations, which was able to respond quickly to such catastrophes and engage the international community in a well-planned reconstruction strategy.

84. In the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, his delegation welcomed the call in the 2005 World Summit Outcome for assistance to enable developing countries to integrate adaptation goals into their sustainable development strategies. It was crucial to change unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, particularly in the developed world, and to provide support, especially for capacity-building and technology transfer to developing countries. He described a number of significant environmental protection measures his country had adopted. United Nations agencies should coordinate their efforts for the timely implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building.

85. His country was fully committed to the implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and other internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

86. **Mr. Chulkov** (Russian Federation), noting that sustainable development was one of the highest priorities on the international agenda, said that his country intended to increase its contribution to resolving sustainable development problems internationally and nationally. The Russian Federation was in general satisfied with the results of the first two-year cycle of the multi-year programme of work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which had made an important contribution to achievement of the aims of the World Summit on Sustainable Development with regard to water, sanitation and human settlements. In the next cycle, it would have to deal with the urgent and thorny problems of energy, climate, industrial development and atmospheric pollution. The Commission should be able to secure a consensus that took account of the multiplicity of specific differences and regions and to reach balanced and practically oriented decisions. There was, however, a need for further improvement in the preparation of the Commission's sessions.

87. His delegation noted with satisfaction the results of the twenty-third session of the Governing Council of UNEP, and especially the contribution of the Programme to study questions relating to water resources, sanitation, chemicals management and strengthening environmental emergency response. It greatly valued and supported enhancement of the United Nations Forum on Forests. With regard to the outcome of its fifth session, his delegation wished to emphasize the attention given to the strategic importance of the United Nations forest process in solving global problems of sustainable development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The sixth session should secure a more comprehensive and coordinated advance of the agenda, and through using existing United Nations mechanisms move it to a qualitatively higher level of cooperation.

88. His delegation welcomed the outcome of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and believed that future work should focus on increasing the efficiency of the implementation process, including activating the efforts of the small island developing States themselves, more effective use of international assistance, ensuring effective monitoring of implementation of the Mauritius Strategy, the

development of partnerships, and expanding the exchange of progressive experience.

89. The World Conference on Disaster Reduction had made an important contribution to the development of the agreed approaches to strengthening global preparedness. His delegation favoured the consistent integration of early warning mechanisms into development planning programmes and considered the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction to be an integral part of efforts at all levels on behalf of the timely achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It welcomed the Secretary-General's interesting proposals to create tools for tracking progress in achieving the objectives of the new renewed Strategy and to improve the mechanisms for its management. The Russian Federation was ready to play an active part in agreeing on ways of tackling that task.

90. His delegation supported the attention given by the United Nations to the sustainable development of mountain regions and believed that the emphasis should be on implementation of the decisions of the World Summit on Sustainable Development with the support of the Mountain Partnership.

91. There should be wider use of new and renewable sources of energy in terms of diversifying supply, protecting the environment and achieving sustainable development. The potential of new and renewable sources of energy should be taken into account in drawing up national and international energy policies and ensuring global energy security.

92. The Russian Federation attached great importance to enhancing universal and constructive cooperation in protecting the world's climate with effective measures which took account of the share of individual countries in global greenhouse gas emissions as well as their potential possibilities of meeting agreed commitments. Full implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change must not become of secondary importance. The forthcoming first meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention marked a new phase in the process of developing universal decisions to combat climate change.

93. International cooperation with respect to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, was of great importance, and due account should be taken of desertification and land degradation in the strategies of the United Nations funds and programmes for achieving Millennium Development Goals.

94. His delegation favoured increased international cooperation under the Convention on Biological Diversity in order to achieve the aims of a genuine reduction in the rate of biological diversity loss by 2010. A significant boost to that end had been given by the entry into force of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and the Russian Federation was giving close attention to the question of acceding to it.

95. **Mr. El Mejerbi** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that progress with respect to Agenda 21 and the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development had been insufficient. Cooperation among most of the developing States was hampered by lack of financial resources, technology and human resources, and the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development in particular had an important role to play in eliminating the constraints. The international community should support UNEP in implementing Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and the Bali Plan of Action, and the Mauritius Strategy. Where the small island developing States were concerned, Hurricane Hugo had highlighted the importance of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction.

96. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was taking steps to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, whose entry into force had enhanced the international community's ability to address climate change. His Government welcomed the designation of 2006 as the International Year of Deserts and Desertification, and it urged greater financial support for the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. It affirmed the 2005 World Summit Outcome and urged all parties to implement its findings on sustainable development and protection of the environment for the sake of future generations.

97. **Mr. Park** Chun-Kyoo (Republic of Korea) said that his delegation welcomed the commitments and recommendations in the 2005 World Summit Outcome with respect to sustainable development and environmental sustainability. Specific processes and strategies should be developed and timetables should be adhered to in order to bring the international community closer to achieving the Millennium

Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals. Although a consensus on the best way forward would not be easy, States should address the most important issues of sustainable development in a spirit of cooperation and compromise and develop results-oriented recommendations to translate the commitments made at the Summit into substantive action. Stronger regional and global partnerships were also essential.

98. The work of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its twelfth and thirteenth sessions had been of great value. Various types of regional meetings and the active participation of major groups contributed to the success of the Commission. His delegation hoped that discussions at the Commission's fourteenth session would pave the way for the development at its fifteenth session of additional consolidated policy options with respect to energy for sustainable development, industrial development, atmosphere/air pollution and climate change. His delegation also expected that the upcoming Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change would produce substantive results calling for prompt and effective action to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.